

Haggerty, Katie

From: Tina Binheimer <tbinheimer@tolland.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2015 11:19 AM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Raised Bill 1094

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today in favor of Raised Bill 1094. As an Animal Control Officer, we face many of the same scenario's as local and state police and in fact are normally not armed to protect ourselves. Handling animal complaints and sometimes having to remove animals brings out emotions that at times, our residents feel very strongly about. These emotions can cause them to lash out at the Animal Control Officer and cause physical injury. I am thankful enough to have never had hands put on me or had to use my OC Spray or Baton however I have been backed down a walkway, cornered in my office, had my driver door slammed open, and met at the door with a rifle. Our job is underestimated as a whole and it is time that we are recognized so that in the situation where we are physically attacked, our attacker would be charged with a Class C Felony.

Gone are the days of the "Dog Catcher", we are trained and certified Animal Control Officers, handling sometimes vicious dogs with aggressive owners, we go serve search warrants with the police to handle the animals, again many times to remove aggressive animals and when those owners who may have been arrested, come looking for us first as we have their dogs. These are not always the most upstanding citizens of our society. We are also cross reporters for Department of Child & Family Services and again the situation which arises may be emotional for the family who lash out at Animal Control. These are only a small sampling of situations which put us out on the front lines and it is amazing that more of us are not severely injured more often. I can only say that must be due to our good training and the tactics taught to us on how to defuse a situation (or how to escape a situation until police arrive). Sometimes if we are lucky, and there may be a Police Officer or Trooper to escort us and cover our backs while we are executing our job in that particular situation however that is not often for those of us in the small towns with either small police departments or none at all.

I am sorry that I could not be there to testify myself, however I hope this letter will be suitable for my government to understand why this bill passing as it is written is so important. In this day of people being against police, or against people in uniform, this will bring us as Animal Control Officers, one step closer to being protected as we should be if assaulted.

Thank you,
Tina M Binheimer
Animal Control Officer
Town of Tolland, CT
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